



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **State Health Department Emphasizes Importance of Mumps Vaccinations**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is reminding North Dakotans about the importance of vaccination in response to an outbreak of mumps in Iowa and neighboring states.

Vaccination is the most important way to prevent mumps. Two doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine are recommended for all children. The first dose of MMR vaccine typically is given at 12 to 15 months of age, and the second dose at 4 to 6 years of age. Children attending day cares in North Dakota are required to be age-appropriately immunized against mumps. Two doses of MMR are required for all children attending schools or colleges in North Dakota.

“Although no vaccine is 100 percent effective, immunization is still the best protection against mumps,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “Parents should make sure their child’s vaccinations are up to date by checking their child’s immunization record or contacting their child’s health-care provider or local public health unit.”

Adults born in and before 1957 are considered immune to mumps. Adults born after 1957 should have been vaccinated with at least one dose of mumps-containing vaccine. Health-care workers should have documented evidence of at least one dose of mumps-containing vaccine, documentation of physician-diagnosed mumps or laboratory evidence of immunity to mumps.

Mumps is an infection caused by the mumps virus that can result in swelling and tenderness of the salivary glands (the cheek and jaw area) along with fever. Swelling may occur on one or both sides of the face and usually affects the gland located just below the front of the ear. Other symptoms include headache, general aches and muscle pains. Most people who become infected start to show signs of mumps within 14 to 25 days after they are exposed.

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Mumps can affect any person of any age who has not had the disease or been adequately immunized against it; however, it is more common among children and young adults. The virus is spread from person to person by coughing and sneezing or by direct contact with saliva and discharges from the nose and throat. People diagnosed with mumps should isolate themselves and not attend school or work for at least nine days after symptoms start.

To monitor for cases of mumps in North Dakota, the Department of Health is asking health-care providers to consider a possible case of mumps in patients who exhibit symptoms consistent with the disease. In addition, the department has developed guidelines for laboratory testing of samples from possible cases. Public health interventions also are being reviewed. For example, if mumps is detected in a school, children who are not immunized will be excluded from school until they receive the vaccination or until 25 days have passed since the last case was detected.

As of April 19, 2006, Iowa health officials have reported 975 cases of mumps, with the majority occurring since March. Cases have ranged in age from ages 1 to 85; however, most cases are between the ages of 18 and 30. Twenty-five percent of the cases reported in Iowa are students currently attending a college or university. The outbreak has spread across Iowa and to neighboring states, including Illinois, Nebraska, Minnesota, Kansas, Wisconsin and Missouri.

One case of mumps has been reported in North Dakota in 2006. The case is not related to Iowa's outbreak. North Dakota typically sees one to two cases of mumps each year. In 2005, five cases of mumps were reported.

For more information about the MMR vaccine, contact your health-care provider or local public health department. For information about Department of Health surveillance activities, contact Molly Sander at 701.328.2378.

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